

POEM FOR A COCKTAIL WAITRESS
AT THE IMPERIAL LOUNGE, FINDLAY, OHIO, 1985

all the insurance guys here
eyes wide
& wet as sucked nipples
in some salesman's dream
you melt them
w/a centerfold look
as you take their money
for whiskey water & beer.

for these guys
its eating lasagna
w/zip-lock baggies
on their tongues.
& for you it's tips
a chance to fuck around
on yr hot rod boyfriend
w/out having to spread
yr long tan legs.

— Pat McKinnon

Duluth MN

BECOMING A LONG BEACH BOY

today i received an honor i'll cherish as much
as Mister Roberts did his medal of the palms.

the three blacks in my intro to lit class asked me
to join them for a few beers at the campus pub.
i did.

we talked about the beautiful women in class
and on campus; they revealed their secret source
for additional dates: a nearby two-year
fashion school for women only. they also
mentioned the literature they enjoyed. one said
he wanted Death of a Salesman never to end.
another favored Conrad's "Youth." the third
opted for Kafka's "Bucket Rider," but they
seemed to derive more pleasure from the reading
than the rest of the class combined. i suggested
perhaps it was because they had a few more
experiences than their middle-class counterparts.
a chorus: right on!

it wasn't my observation that made the day
but rather for the few hours we sat together
they treated me as their equal.

A SLIDE INTO THE PACIFIC

Helen Glide is handsome, stylish, and all woman.
she grew up tough in a Chicago ghetto,
fought off rapists, pimps, and muggers.
streetwise, she supported herself as a nude model
while mastering two degrees at Boulder, Colorado.
by 27, she had transformed herself into a
sophisticated Ph.D. from Chicago U., moved
west and 20 years later was living in a pleasant
condo with a Long Beach view. here was a real-life
Joan Crawford success story. "Not bad," Helen
thought as she sipped her nightly chablis,
a cork's pop above the Pacific's purr. "Not bad at all."

one night, a neighbor, southern born and southern
rich, made an offer Helen could not refuse:
\$150,000 cash on the wine bottle for an original
\$30,000 investment. Helen could T-bill herself
into security. but the bubble burster came when
la belle dame sans poesie explained the purchase:
"Ah'm olda now and simply cahn't travel as widely
as ah previously could. Of course, ah have to have
mah maid close by. I thought your apahtment
would be a neat and tidy spot for her."

the low register in which Helen tells this tale
proves that posing in the buff is a pedestal on
which to build immunity against a variety of chills.

HIT IN THE HEAD

in the men's room on upper campus
the newly installed, AIDS-inspired
condom machine had been wrenched open
its front panel flapping
like a prudish tongue.
the cupboard was bare.

what sexual Ahab frenzy had
stirred this King Kong passion?

did the hot, little number in Anthro I
whisper in his ear after a Dionysian